



State board reviews proposed teacher resources

At its June meeting, the Kentucky Board of Education welcomed four new members and discussed several initiatives proposed by the Kentucky Department of Education that will provide greater assistance to teachers. The proposals are the result of data reviews and requests from educators for help in focusing closer on curriculum, instruction, assessment and reflective classroom practices.

The new board members are Bonnie Lash Freeman, David

Rhodes, Janna Vice and David Webb. (See Page 11 for photo of their swearing-in ceremony.)

The board heard discussions about snapshot assessments and end-of-course assessments that would be designed by department staff to support classroom teachers in curriculum, instruction and assessment. Snapshot assessment refers to any single assessment used formatively to determine interim student progress. Teachers can use information gathered from

this assessment to modify their instruction to improve student achievement.

As part of its effort to offer greater assistance to classroom teachers, department staff recommend one or more of the following approaches for using snapshot assessments through a technology-based delivery system: curriculum-linked snapshot assessments, unit-linked/district-driven snapshot assessments and district-driven snapshot assessments. The board

advised department staff to proceed with development of these tools, selecting the approach that will allow school districts the most flexibility to meet individual needs.

The board also approved the department's plans to develop end-of-course assessments as an instructional resource. These assessments would be available to districts and schools as one component of an aligned instructional resource system, along with curriculum maps, units

of study, snapshot assessments and other tools for teachers and administrators. (See **TEACHING TOOLS** story on this page.)

Decisions about whether and how to use end-of-course assessments would be made at the local level. Work will begin immediately on mathematics and language arts end-of-course assessments with other content areas added later.

The board also explored a third initiative — in-state teacher scoring

See **STATE** on Page 10

Farris named state's first African-American superintendent

Elaine Farris made Kentucky history this summer when she was named the commonwealth's first African-American public school superintendent. Farris became superintendent of Shelby County Schools on July 1.



Elaine Farris

"This is such an honor," Farris said. "I appreciate the board's support and its faith in my abilities. I look forward to leading this district's dedicated staff in our efforts to ensure all kids

achieve at high levels."

Farris was one of three minorities who participated in the Kentucky Department of Education's Minority Superintendent Training Program during the 2003-2004 school year. As a superintendent intern, she spent the past year as assistant to Leon Mooneyhan, who retired after serving 16 years as the district's school chief.

Farris began her educational career 21 years ago as a classroom teacher in Clark County. She was principal at Shearer Elementary in Clark County and was elementary director for Fayette County Schools before joining the Minority Superintendent Training Program.

During the Fulton High School production of "Kilroy was Here," Professor Milton Sullivan, portrayed by Nick Lee, hypnotizes three Americans, including Kilroy, right, portrayed by Olie Jackson, to gain classified information. The play about World War II was a culminating activity for the schoolwide, yearlong study of the era.

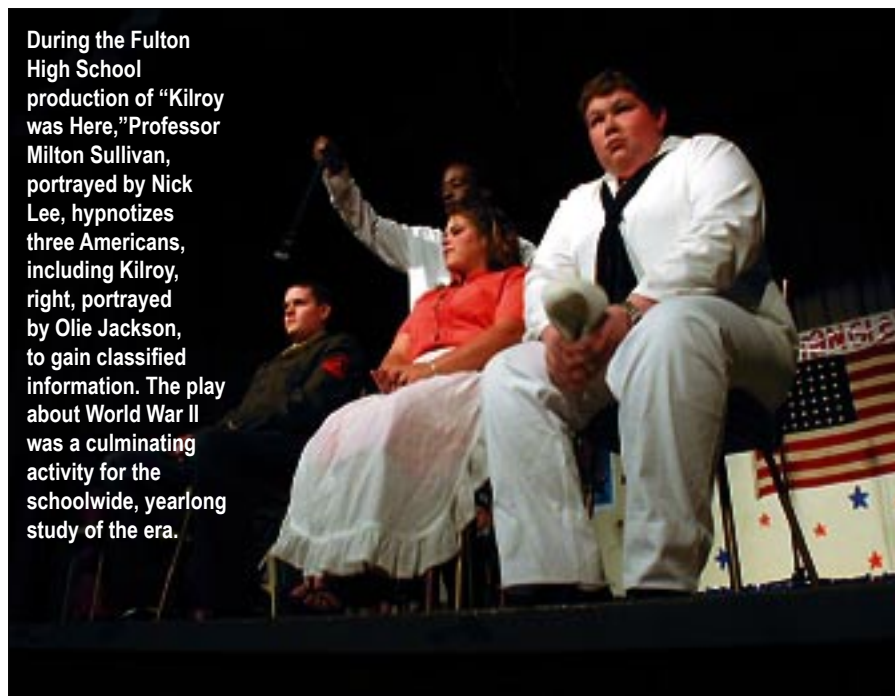


Photo by Rick McComb

"Kilroy" makes his mark at Fulton High School

By Dianne Owen
Fulton Independent Schools

Can dinner theater be a teaching tool for high school? It can if it's the culminating event for a schoolwide integration project that involves students, teachers, parents and the community. It can if it's part of a year-long learning project that integrates career/technical education with core content subjects.

For the past two years, teachers at Fulton (Independent) High School have used this strategy to immerse students in the culture and history of different time periods. Teachers collaborate to develop and offer a variety

of activities to teach students core content around each theme.

Last year, our students studied World War II. History teacher Ann Watson suggested the musical "Kilroy Was Here" as the culminating activity for the schoolwide unit of study. "Kilroy" is a fictional character whose cartoon doodle "Kilroy Was Here" first appeared in World War II on walls, tanks and other military vehicles to represent American military presence overseas. The image has shown up in foreign countries during the Vietnam, Korean and Gulf and, most recently, Iraqi conflicts.

See **KILROY** on Page 9

Teaching Tools site welcomes teachers back to instruction

By Faun S. Fishback
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The Kentucky Department of Education has a "back-to-school" present for public school teachers. Kentucky educators can start the 2004-2005 school year with a set of new curriculum tools to help plan their instruction.

The new "Teaching Tools" Web site provides teachers, schools and districts with a Web-based community of learning. Although the site is still being developed, educators already can find a powerful combined curriculum document and several curriculum maps that have been used by Kentucky schools and districts.

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Bulletin Board



Conferences

Environmental Education

The Kentucky Association for Environmental Education will hold its annual conference Sept. 10-12 in Louisville. The theme is “Biodiversity — Exploring Kentucky’s Spectacular Nature.”

Blackacre State Nature Preserve is the site for the Friday workshops. Saturday sessions will be held at the Louisville Zoo, and Sunday morning field trips will begin at the zoo.

Families are welcome. A day camp for children is available on Saturday at the zoo.

Contact: Doug McCoy, conference co-chair, (502) 238-5343, doug.mccoy@loukymetro.org
www.kaee.org

Kentucky Reading

The Kentucky Reading Association’s fall conference will be held Sept. 17-18 in Lexington. Authors Kathi Appelt, Ann Martin and Jacqueline Woodson will be featured at the conference.

Contact: Faye Newsome, faye.newsome@eku.edu or download the registration form from the Web site.
www.library.eku.edu/direct/gardner/KRA/2004_Fall_Conference.htm

Counseling

The Kentucky Counseling Association will hold its fall conference Oct. 19-22 in Louisville. The conference theme is “Counseling Solutions for Life.”

Those attending the conference will earn six hours of Effective Instructional Leadership Training credit. Either six or 12 hours of additional credit is available by attending a pre-conference workshop.

www.kyca.org/conference/2004/fall_conference_2004.html

School Councils

The Kentucky Association of School Councils (KASC) will meet Oct. 28-29 in Louisville. The theme is “Doing More With Less...Achieving Excellence in Tight Times.”

Both new and experienced council members can fulfill their training requirements at the conference.

Contact: KASC offices, (859) 238-2188, kasc@kasc.net
www.kasc.net/Conference.htm

Events

Stage One student matinees

Stage One will offer student matinees for seven productions during the 2004-2005 season at the Kentucky Center in Louisville. The “Get In The Act” series is for children ages 3-8, the “Young Stages” series for elementary students and the “Teen Dreamers” series for middle and high school students.

Tickets for student matinees are \$6 each. Teach-

ers can attend free preview performances of each play. Stage One also provides free lesson plans for each production and other teaching tools for the arts, aligned to core content, on its Web site.

Contact: Box Office, (800) 755-777
www.stageone.org:80/site/home.asp and click on “Student Matinees”

Resources

Physics and astronomy

David P. Stern, a physicist retired from NASA’s Goddard Space Flight Center, has written several educational resources to help nonscientists understand and explore physics and astronomy, especially those areas that concern space. The resources explore basic astronomy, Newtonian mechanics, the sun and weather, and space flight. Each resource contains lesson plans and offers a Spanish translation.

www.phy6.org

Mathematics and science

The National Network of Eisenhower Consortia and Clearinghouse has developed a Web page that lists no-cost/low-cost resources to help educators improve mathematics and science teaching and learning.

www.mathscienencenetwork.org/products.htm

Matchmaking

iloveschools.com is a free service that matches teachers’ needs for classroom materials and supplies with donors who support education by providing these resources, either new or used.

www.iloveschools.com

Freedom Center

The National Underground Railroad Freedom Center has opened in Cincinnati. The center offers exhibits and displays related to the Underground Railroad as well as online lesson plans and other resources to help teachers prepare students for the exhibits and stories of the Underground Railroad.

www.freedomcenter.org

Kentucky Music Hall of Fame

The Kentucky Music Hall of Fame and Museum in Renfro Valley celebrates the state’s musical diversity with guided tours and special demonstrations for school groups. A teacher’s study guide and educational packet can be downloaded from the museum’s Web site.

Contact: Museum office toll free (877) 356-3263
www.kymusichalloffame.com

FirstGov en Español

The U.S. government has created a new Web site to help make government information and services available in Spanish. Additionally, a Spanish-speaking information specialist is available Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. (ET), by calling the toll-free number, (800) 333-4636.

www.espanol.gov

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Commissioner's Comments

Let's begin school with 'open eyes and willing feet'

By Gene Wilhoit

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"The path of enlightenment requires open eyes and willing feet, The roots of education are bitter, but the fruit is sweet."

I think Aristotle's comment is an apt reminder for all of us as we begin another school year in Kentucky. We often get entangled in the bitter roots of budget concerns, regulations and requirements, time constraints and other external pressures.

However, we must remain motivated to reaching our goal of giving every Kentucky youngster the world-class education he or she deserves. To rephrase Aristotle, student success in our public schools is the sweetest fruit!

School improvement

Schools are starting off the 2004-2005 school year knowing whether or not they have met Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) for the federal No Child Left Behind Act. This year, consequences can be imposed on schools that did not meet their AYP goals in 2003 and 2004.

This fall also marks the conclusion of another two-year testing cycle under the Commonwealth Accountability Testing System (CATS). In late September, schools will learn whether or not they have reached their 2004 accountability goals.

The state's lowest-performing schools (Level 1, Level 2 or Level 3) will receive assistance from the Kentucky Department of Education. Scholastic audits, scholastic reviews and help from highly skilled certified staff are part of our assistance designed to improve teaching and learning at these schools.

By law, if any of the 29 schools that were designated as Level 3 in 2002 remains at Level 3 in 2004, the district must participate in a district scholastic audit. This year marks the first of these mandatory district audits, which are triggered when any school within a district fails to improve for two consecutive accountability cycles.

Kentucky's scholastic audit and review process is teaching us about high-performing and low-performing schools. With each audit and review conducted since 1999, we have gained greater insight into how to help

our schools improve. By continually refining our evaluation tools, such as "The School Level Performance Descriptors and Glossary for Kentucky's Standards and Indicators for School Improvement," we are confident we know what a fully functioning, successful school looks like.

The data we've gathered through the audits and reviews are helping our weaker schools diagnose their problems. They are becoming more informed about how to make progress toward proficiency. They also have an abundance of data to inform their needs assessments and Comprehensive School Improvement Plans.

One unexpected benefit of our school improvement program is the help it gives to high-performing schools. Many schools meeting or working above their goals voluntarily use these same descriptors to assess their instruction and learning. They find that these descriptors help them improve on their previous work and maximize opportunities for improvement.

It's no secret that Kentucky's school improvement policies and practices are nationally recognized. This past summer, Pat Hurt, director of the department's Division of School Improvement, shared our evaluation tools with representatives from nearly 20 other states at the Association of School Curriculum Development conference.

Additionally, Colorado, New Jersey and Louisiana are basing their states' scholastic review programs on Kentucky's nine standards and indicators for school improvement.

No rewards

Schools that meet or exceed their goals for the 2003-2004 biennium will not receive rewards this fall because of previous and current state budget allocations. However, the Kentucky Board of Education does plan to honor our high-achieving schools.

State board members and I will visit schools that have reached proficiency or beyond, Recognition Point 5 (100). During recognition ceremonies in their areas, we will honor "Pacesetter" schools, those in the top 5 percent of all schools and at or above Recognition Point 4 (88). We will present each school with a flag commemorating the achievement and a certificate.

We will mail recognition flags and certificates to schools scoring at or above Recognition Points 1 (55), 2 (66) and 3 (77). We also will mail certificates and letters to all schools that meet Adequate Yearly Progress under the federal No Child Left Behind Act.

We will notify newspapers and radio and TV stations about the accomplishments of all these schools so that all Kentuckians can celebrate their progress.

2005 testing

The CATS testing window has been shortened to two weeks for 2005 to help Kentucky meet the reporting timelines for the 2001 No Child Left Behind Act. Tests will be administered at public schools throughout the state April 18-29, 2005.

Keep on writing

The writing portfolio is being discussed and evaluated as the state board prepares a Request for Proposals (RFP) for Kentucky's next testing contractor.

The writing portfolio and on-demand writing have dramatically improved the writing skills of Kentucky students. However, we do need to improve the process and eliminate some unintended negative practices.

Many of the state board members share my opinion that it is not the assessment of writing that is the problem in our schools. Instruction often underlies the problem. I can cite many instances where the process of portfolio writing is out of control — and it's turning teachers and students off to this very vital form of real-world communication and self-expression.

A task force of educators will make recommendations about the writing portfolio to the state board at its Aug. 11-12 meeting. These stakeholders have examined all aspects of portfolios — from the percent of weight portfolios have in the academic index to the quality of writing portfolio training teachers receive.

Beginning the new testing contract process does not herald a wholesale revision of CATS. Instead, it offers Kentucky educators an opportunity to improve the system.

I have no doubt that reasonable improvements will be made to our testing system. As we conduct our work, the goal of CATS will remain: to provide a valid and reliable public accountability gauge to measure the status of every school in meeting the goals set by the legislature as implemented by the board.

I hope we all can begin this school year with "open eyes and willing feet" as we continue leading Kentucky's public school children to proficiency and beyond. I expect great things for education this school year!

To comment on this topic, send e-mail to the commissioner at gwilhoit@kde.state.ky.us.



Photo by Rick McComb

Looking for bargains

Morgan Lusby and Alexis O'Bannon, students at Anne Mason Elementary in Scott County, show Education Commissioner Gene Wilhoit how they use the local paper to compare the costs of goods and services for an economics assignment.

Golf offers students a new approach to life



Chris Maggard, a freshman at North Laurel High, sinks a putt on the practice green.



Helen Azblick, a senior at South Laurel High, tees off on the first hole at Wasioto Winds Golf Course.

Photos by Rick McComb

What is The First Tee?

Developed by the World Golf Foundation eight years ago, The First Tee Life Skills experience uses golf to teach students goal-setting and decision-making skills. The program also teaches values such as honor, integrity and sportsmanship.

Nationwide, more than 300,000 young people participate in The First Tee at more than 400 affiliated golf courses. Wasioto Winds in Pineville is the first Kentucky The First Tee chapter. Several other groups are planning chapters in other areas of the state. Grants and local businesses help provide financial support for the program.

www.thefirsttee.org

By Joy Barr

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The game of golf is sometimes compared to the game of life. Players set personal goals and make decisions that affect the outcome of their games. Successful golfers rely on values such as integrity, trust and sportsmanship to achieve their goals.

That's why some Laurel County students are learning about life by spending time on the golf course. As participants in The First Tee of Pine Mountain, these students are learning the fundamentals of golf and important life skills they can use at home, at school or in the community.

Students travel from the district's middle and high schools in London to Wasioto Winds Golf Course in Pineville to participate in this unique program. Last school year, nearly 40 students in grades 6 through 12 participated. They learned everything from putting to gaining self-confidence.

The First Tee is open to at-risk students who, without the proper teaching and role models, might not develop to their full potential. Students are invited to participate and must attend school, have no discipline reports, complete their work and exhibit good attitude and behavior to remain

in the program. Students who fail to follow those rules cannot participate in the program for one month.

"This program has helped me a lot," said Amanda Rose, a South Laurel Middle School student. "I've learned how to control my anger and to respect others. Plus, my grades have gotten better."

The First Tee teaches nine core values — responsibility, confidence, respect, sportsmanship, judgment, courtesy, perseverance, honesty and integrity. These values lead to success in life, but they also play a major role in the success of any golfer.

"We try to have at least five students each from the two high schools and two middle schools," said Norm Bowling, a physical education teacher at South Laurel Middle who heads up the district's program. "Some are at-risk students. Some are recommended by their teachers. Plus, we have some peer mentors who are good role models and some adult mentors from out in the community. Some of the peer mentors are excellent students and top-notch junior golfers."

Anabel Fernandez, a student at nearby Lincoln Memorial University in Tennessee, volunteers with The First Tee Program. "I have never seen a program like

this before. Golf can definitely help you in every aspect of your life," she said.

The First Tee of Pine Mountain at Wasioto Winds is the first site in Kentucky accredited by The First Tee Program. The golf course is located at Pine Mountain State Resort Park.

Kimberly Brown, supervisor of instruction for Laurel County Schools, was instrumental in implementing the program. She was looking for new and non-traditional avenues of learning for Laurel County students. The district also had been searching for a way to reduce dropouts in the middle and high schools.

"This is a dropout initiative that the county is undertaking to keep kids interested in school," said Brown. "The curriculum improves the students' self esteem, behavior and attention spans. In addition, the relationships that are built through golf are vital.

"Teachers are reporting positive gains. Behavior improves and attendance improves. It is a wonderful opportunity for students that teaches core content, but also teaches them to be focused and to behave better," Brown continued.

Students in the program get a chance to learn the game of golf — from basic stretching exer-

cises to working on a swing simulator to actually getting outside and hitting on the course. Most of the students have never touched a golf club in their lives, but have become fast fans of the sport.

Not only do they learn the game, they also get a chance to meet new people. "I've learned to respect others, and to be patient and to ask for help," said Rose, the South Laurel Middle student. "I would recommend this program."

Curriculum for Laurel County students in The First Tee Program is aligned to Kentucky's Core Content for Assessment. Instruction spans all content areas. Students perform skits to portray the nine core values. They use mathematics skills to estimate distance and analyze geometric angles. They study geography and analyze weather conditions. Students also discuss social structures and peer interaction in the program.

In addition, Laurel County students have the opportunity to compete for full and partial scholarships. Georgetown College is one of 23 participating institutions of higher education throughout the country to award scholarships to The First Tee Scholars.

"The (Laurel County) students are engaged in all activities and

have a great time while learning," said Connie Shackelford, a curriculum consultant with the Kentucky Department of Education. "Character education is integrated into all activities in a way that demonstrates the usefulness of appropriate behavior in the real world. Most students that drop out of school are not involved in any extracurricular activities. The First Tee Program provides a great learning experience for all students and may provide a reason for some students to stay in school."

Certified First Tee trainers Jerry Shoffner and Donnie Caldwell work with the students for three to four hours when the group visits the golf course. The trainers provide individual, small group and large group instruction on the golf course and in the classroom.

Students are rewarded for good behavior with a box of golf balls or a bag of tees. A few students have received complete sets of clubs and golf bags for their mastery of the nine core values.

Contact: Kimberly Brown, [LaurelCountySchools](mailto:kbrown@laurel.k12.ky.us), (606) 862-4608; kbrown@laurel.k12.ky.us or Norm Bowling, South Laurel Middle School, (606) 862-4745; normbowling@laurel.k12.ky.us.

KY Teaching and Learning Conference '05 seeks presenters

The Kentucky Teaching and Learning Conference (KTLC), "Pathways to Proficiency '05," is looking for presenters for the three-day conference, scheduled March 3-5, 2005, at the Kentucky International Convention Center in Louisville. KTLC activities explore all aspects of teaching, learning and school management that will help move all Kentucky schools to

**Pathways
to
PROFICIENCY '05**

proficiency and beyond by 2014.

Presenters can be educators, administrators or vendors. They can lead workshops or sessions during the conference:

- Workshops will be held on Thursday and Friday of the con-

ference. They are three hours in length and can be either hands-on labs with 30 computers or mind-on interactive presentations. Participants pay an additional conference fee to attend workshops.

- Sessions are one to two hours in length and will be held on Friday and Saturday. Admission to sessions is included in the conference registration fee. Sessions can be presentations/demonstrations by individuals or co-presenters, panel discussions of critical issues or

hands-on activities.

Conference registration will be waived for main presenters. Co-presenters are required to register for the conference and pay the registration fee. Vendors must be exhibitors at KTLC to present at a workshop or session.

Applications to present can be made online at the conference Web site by Sept. 13. Go to www.kentuckytlc.org and click on "Call for Presenters" to access the application and complete applica-

tion information.

Presentations will be judged on qualifications of the presenter(s), relevance to student learning and the conference theme, effective integration of technology, connection to Kentucky's Standards and Indicators for School Improvement and inclusion of Kentucky's professional development standards.

For answers to your questions about KTLC or the application process, send e-mail to ktlc@kde.state.ky.us.

Jazz up your classes with free business and mathematics tool

How can educators connect the ever-changing world of business with the world of education in a way that will excite and motivate students? The Kentucky Society of Certified Public Accountants (KSCPA) can provide business and mathematics teachers with the tools they need to build tomorrow's work force — today!

KSCPA is offering a free educator's tool kit, called the CPA i-PACK. This professionally prepared instructional package contains a video, education handbook and career booklets. The CPA i-PACK will connect your classroom to the world of business, build successful students and present new

tools to assist you in teaching accounting, business and mathematics.

The handbook has 15 lesson plans complete with objectives and procedures, topic overviews and student learning activities with answer keys. A few of the topics included in the education handbook are budgeting and forecasting, financial statement analysis, break-even analysis and time value of money.

The lesson plans are based on National Business Education Association and National Council of Teachers of Mathematics standards. Kentucky teachers and mathematics and career & technical education

consultants at the Kentucky Department of Education are working to align the CPA i-PACK to Kentucky's Core Content and the Kentucky Occupational Skill Standards.

Teachers can learn to use the CPA i-PACK at the Kentucky Council of Teachers of Mathematics Conference Oct. 30 in Frankfort and the free KSCPA High School Educators Symposium on Nov. 4 at Western Kentucky University in Bowling Green.

The KSCPA symposium allows teachers to network, share ideas and teaching methods with other educators, and learn about the organization's educator programs and resources. It also provides an opportunity to

ask questions and hear from a panel of CPAs from different arenas of the business world.

KSCPA also maintains a speaker's bureau. More than 160 certified public accountants across the state are available to speak to high school students as part of the organization's Accounting Careers Recruitment Initiative.

To receive your free CPA i-PACK, register for the High School Educators Symposium, request a speaker for your classroom or to be added to KSCPA's mailing list, call Jenni Buckner at the KSCPA office in Louisville at (502) 736-1360 or toll free at (800) 292-1754. Her e-mail address is jbuckner@kycpa.org.

95 percent of classes taught by 'highly qualified' teachers

Teachers who have attained the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 definition of "highly qualified" taught nearly 95 percent of the core content classes in Kentucky public schools during the 2003-2004 school year, according to data released by the Education Professional Standards Board. The federal education law requires veteran teachers of core academic subjects in public school and districts that receive Title I funds to gain highly qualified status by the end of the 2005-2006 school year.

To be highly qualified, a teacher must hold a bachelor's degree, hold full Kentucky teaching certification and demonstrate competency in each of the core academic subjects taught. Veteran teachers in Title I schools must demonstrate they meet the requirements. New teachers must demonstrate highly qualified status upon initial employment in a Title I school.

While no "sanctions" will be taken against teachers who do not meet highly qualified status by 2005-2006, the NCLB law indicates that districts receiving federal funds must comply. Districts employing teachers who do not have highly qualified status will place their federal funding in jeopardy.

There is a simple way for Kentucky teachers to find out if they meet the requirements. Log on to the Education Professional Standards Board (EPSB) Web site at www.kyepsb.net and click on "No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act of 2001 Informa-

tion." Then click on the "Highly Qualified Teacher Calculator" link. Once the calculator is open, teachers can proceed through each succeeding Web screen of the calculator to determine their status.

If teachers do not meet the requirements, according to the calculator, they can become highly qualified in one of three ways:

- Take and pass the Praxis exam(s) required for the core academic course(s) for which they are seeking to become highly qualified;

- Earn additional points on the HOUSS Index (refer to the Highly Qualified Teacher Calculator) by (a) taking more content (college courses or professional development) in the core academic subject(s) for which they are seeking to become highly qualified, and/or (b) earning professional achievements/awards in the core academic course(s) for which they are seeking to become highly qualified;

- Earn additional points on the HOUSS Index — if the teachers are not Title I teachers — by continuing to teach, until 2006-2007, in the core academic subject(s) for which they are seeking to become highly qualified.

The EPSB Web site also provides a link to "NCLB Addendum #3," which provides answers to specific concerns Kentucky teachers have expressed about achieving highly qualified status.

For more information, call toll free (888) 598-7667.



Photo by Rick McComb

Keeping art in focus

Garth Elementary 5th-grader Kristen Perkins runs past the door of art teacher Kitty Dougoud's classroom in the Scott County school. Dougoud, a 24-year veteran public school teacher, also teaches art education at nearby Georgetown College.

Teachers and librarians get discount at book fair

The Kentucky Book Fair will host a private sale for teachers and librarians on Nov. 12 from 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. at the Farnham Dudgeon Convention Center in Frankfort. Books from more than 160 authors can be purchased before the book fair opens to the general public from 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. on Saturday, Nov. 13.

The Kentucky Book Fair draws thousands of readers to Frankfort each year to meet authors and buy their books. Money raised through the sale of these books is returned through grants to school and public libraries and other literacy-related causes in the state.

The special preview day sale is an opportunity for teachers and librarians at both school and public libraries to purchase non-autographed books at a 20 percent discount. Teachers and librarians also can purchase autographed copies on Saturday and receive the discount.

Teachers and librarians must have identifying documentation and a ProCard or purchase order plus the school or organization's tax identification number to qualify for the 20 percent discount on Friday and Saturday.

For details about the special preview sale, or for more information about the Kentucky Book Fair, contact Connie Crowe, fair manager, at KyBookFair@ky.gov or visit the Web site at www.kybookfair.org.



Photo by Rick McComb

Time travelers at Fort Harrod

Patty Hall, a doll maker at Ft. Harrod State Park in Harrodsburg, explains the history of rag dolls and the art of making them to teachers Deana Coyne Jones, Kenton County Schools; Beckie Godby, Russell County Schools, and Kym Powell, Oldham County Schools. These teachers participated in the Ohio Valley Educational Cooperative's Kentucky History Academy during June. The Academy was one of several Teaching American History Summer Institutes conducted in Kentucky this summer. During weeklong sessions, teachers traveled to historic sites, received social studies resource materials, discussed teaching and technology strategies, and worked on developing standards-based units of study, lesson plans or other activities for their classrooms.

Online master's program offered

The University of Tennessee at Martin is offering an online master of science in education degree, with a major in educational administration and supervision, beginning with the fall 2004 semester.

Courses in this degree have the same quality expectations as on-campus courses, according to university officials. Additionally, online students receive the same services offered to on-campus students: online admissions, online registration, online fee payment, online bookstore, online library and online financial aid application.

Tennessee residents will pay \$849 for a three-hour course in the program, while out-of-state students will pay \$889 for a three-hour course for the 2004-2005 academic year.

For a program overview, which includes course descriptions, program check sheets and admission links, go to www.utm.edu/newcollege/edas.htm. For more information, contact Tommy Cates, online university studies coordinator, by e-mail at tcates@utm.edu or call toll-free at (866) 587-7589.

MSU to discount tuition for K-12 educators

Morehead State University is offering a tuition discount to teachers and other education professionals in Kentucky who enroll in graduate courses to improve their professional education credentials.

The Kentucky Educators Excellence Program (KEEP) offers a 10 percent reduction in published tuition rates to those employed by K-12 schools and adult education programs. The discount applies to graduate courses — including those offered on the Internet — recognized by the Kentucky Education Professional

Standards Board for additional administrative or teaching credentials and required for a degree, non-degree program or administrative or teaching certification.

"This program was created as part of our ongoing commitment to the university's historic mission of teacher training by lessening the financial burden of our colleagues in elementary, secondary and adult education who are striving to improve themselves," said MSU President Ronald G. Eaglin.

KEEP participants are required to apply for the program, be admitted to a specific credentialing program, and show evidence of their employment by a P-12 school or district or adult education center in Kentucky. Participants must pre-register for a maximum of two courses each semester. MSU's summer sessions will be treated as a single semester.

The program is administered by MSU's Office of Graduate Programs. Detailed information is available online at www.moreheadstate.edu/keep.

Bluegrass music teacher workshop set

Elementary and secondary classroom and music teachers can attend a free workshop, "Utilizing Bluegrass Music in the Classroom," on Saturday, Oct. 9, during the Bluegrass Fan Fest in Louisville. Participants will receive professional development credit.

During the seven-hour course, professional artists will demonstrate the instruments used and vocal harmony structure of traditional bluegrass music. A new educational DVD on the history and development of bluegrass music

will be previewed at the workshop. The DVD offers six 10-minute segments with accompanying lesson plans. The new educational tool will be distributed to teachers and home-school parents nationwide.

Participants will receive lesson plans and watch presentations on the history and evolution of bluegrass music. Hands-on projects and activities for students, such as learning to play a song on the banjo and building a mini-washtub bass and a two-string banjo will be available.

Teachers attending also will receive a number of bluegrass music resources and take-home handouts, along with a free one-day festival pass.

Class size is limited to 50 participants. Register by Sept. 20 by calling Nancy Cardwell, special projects director for the International Bluegrass Music Association, toll free at (888) 438-4262 or (615) 256-3222 or by sending e-mail to nancyc@ibma.org. For more information, go to www.ibma.org and click on "World of Bluegrass Event Info."

Russell Primary opens window of opportunity for arts and language

By Cathy Lindsey

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¿Se habla español? If you visit Russell Primary School, you will certainly get a lesson in speaking Spanish. As part of the school's Spanish integration program, everyone from the students and faculty to the custodians and cafeteria workers are learning Spanish words and culture.

"We feel that a second language is crucial at any age, but especially this age," said Principal Deneen Zimmerman. "Brain research tells us this age is our window of opportunity."

Russell Primary is one of 10 Kentucky schools to receive Arts and Humanities Foreign Language Integration grants from the state last July. The two-year pilot program encourages the integration of arts and humanities into the school curriculum.

Created during the 2002 legislative session, the grant program was modeled after a curriculum used by Daviess County Schools. That model program trains every student in arts, foreign language, music and critical thinking.

According to Senate Bill 154, the General Assembly believes that arts and foreign language education can "renew and invigorate faculty and can foster greater parent and community participation and support."

"The grants offered the opportunity to take a highly successful model — like the one in Daviess County that applies brain compatible learning principles — and replicate that model across the commonwealth to see if the same positive impact on student achievement in all content areas could be duplicated in all regions of Kentucky," explained Philip Shepherd, arts and humanities consultant for the Kentucky Department of Education.

The faculty at Russell Primary sought the grant to improve the school's arts and humanities state test scores. The school hired Spanish teacher Judy Fields and scheduled collaboration days to infuse the grants' goals into the regular classroom.

"This grant allowed us to have genuine collaboration time between specialty teachers and regular education teachers," said Zimmerman. "This enhanced our regular classroom instruction and

allowed the teachers to incorporate the arts better than we had ever done it."

Using a program called *Sonrisas*, Fields helped teachers integrate the arts and plan lessons to teach this curriculum. *Sonrisas*, which means smiles in Spanish, is an instructional program in Spanish for elementary students. This program is based on the idea that learning at all intelligences can be significantly enhanced with the use of music, stories, art, dance, creative visual aids, games and a relaxed, fun-filled environment.

Teachers incorporated Spanish culture and language in many different ways throughout the year. Fields visited each class once a week for 30 minutes. She led songs in Spanish and taught basic Spanish vocabulary words, such as colors and shapes.

Each morning, teachers on breakfast duty in the school cafeteria greeted the students in Spanish to the *Desayuno Club* (Breakfast Club). As Spanish music played, Fields taught words for breakfast foods and eating utensils.

During the morning announcements, students learned a weekly Spanish phrase they could use in the classroom. For example, *¿Como te llamas?* (What is your name?) After the morning announcements, teachers played a Spanish review tape for daily language reinforcement.

Teachers used "calendar time" each day to teach students the days of the week, months, numbers and other appropriate Spanish words that help students make real-life connections. Also, students from the Advanced Spanish class at Russell High School worked with the primary students once a week.

The school displayed prints by multicultural artists and hosted an assembly that featured a performance by the *Alborada* family. They performed songs and dances from South America and Mexico with native instruments as accompaniment.

All students attended a ballet and experienced part of the Hispanic culture by visiting an authentic Mexican restaurant. The students ordered their meals in Spanish.

The primary students are not graded in their Spanish language skills, but because the subject is



Photo by Rick McComb

Judy Fields, Spanish teacher at Russell (Independent) Elementary, quizzes students about the Spanish pronunciation of words for colors and shapes on the paper she holds.

grant-funded, students are tested to measure the program's effectiveness. The intention is more to assess the instruction rather than to assess the students.

Students took an arts and humanities pre-test last fall. It covered vocabulary, music, movement, colors, staging and mapping. This set a baseline for what the students already knew and what they would learn.

Last spring, the students took another test to gauge the effectiveness of the program. School counselor Jade Maddox reported that there was improvement from all students.

With no state budget approved, future funding for this grant is uncertain. Some Kentucky educators have expressed concerns about the program's future. They say that's because studies show

that lessons learned through the arts and humanities programs translate to other content areas. According to a report released last year by the Arts Education Partnership, "There is compelling data that links arts education to success in school on both the academic achievement and social behavioral levels in such areas as reading and language development, mathematics, fundamental thinking skills, motivation to learn and school environment."

Russell Primary will continue with parts of its program even if continuation of the grant is not funded. There was enough money left from the first year to employ Spanish teacher Fields this school year.

"The collaboration time with our special area teachers will be gone," said school counselor Maddox, "but

the ideas can be implemented for many years to come."

The school will continue to do this because, according to Maddox, students are beginning to make connections across the curriculum in arts and humanities, reading and social studies.

"We feel it is important to provide young students with meaningful experiences that will enrich their lives," said principal Zimmerman. "The integration of the arts and humanities is important for developing cultural awareness. We hope to enable our students to appreciate their culture, the culture of others and historical heritage."

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Classroom tests aren't only about student grades

By Mark Wasicsko

Eastern Kentucky University

Tests that teachers use in their classrooms to assess student learning ought to do more than furnish a grade and measure what students don't know. However, these seem to be the predominant uses for classroom tests.

Consequently, most students see tests as ends in themselves: "You finish the test, your teacher gives you a grade and you'll never have to remember that stuff again!"

A good classroom assessment provides valid and reliable measures of what students know and can do. The best testing plans also create conditions that build student responsibility for their own learning and help teachers assess their teaching.

The time- and research-tested strategies listed here can improve the effectiveness of classroom tests and significantly increase student learning:

- Use criterion-referenced testing rather than grading on a curve. Think how students feel after studying hard for an exam only to get a "C" because their scores were low relative to other students. Worse yet, what study habits are reinforced when — without studying at all — some students get higher grades than they deserve because everyone else did poorly? Both cases provide the wrong lesson about learning. To increase learning, students must see the relationship between their efforts to master the material and the grades they earn. A good criterion-referenced test ensures that students who know the material can take home good grades and those who don't know the material will not.

- Grade and return tests promptly. When tests are graded and returned quickly, students see the relationship between studying and success on tests. Computer-enhanced test generators can make feedback almost instantaneous.

- Err on the side of validity. Good classroom tests assess knowledge and skills — not whether students can guess the answer the instructor had in mind. Allow students to "challenge" test questions they feel are ambiguous or invalid by writing their interpretation of the correct answer on the back of the exam when taking the

test. If the student's challenge demonstrates a comprehensive understanding of the answer, he or she gets credit for the question and the test maintains validity. If many students who seem to know the material get an item wrong or vice versa the item is invalid anyway.

- Give "pop" quizzes. Unexpected, or pop, quizzes can increase student learning and improve study habits. Students study smaller "chunks" of material at a time rather than a lot of material in night-before-the-test cramming sessions. A well-conceived pop quiz plan can actually reduce test anxiety for students and add to their fun of learning. Try using "extra credit" pop quizzes during the first few minutes of class. Students getting 80 percent or higher earn points toward

force the incentive for learning all the correct answers from each test.

- Use different types of questions. Objective-type tests that stress highly specific knowledge can lead to memorization or "rote learning." Overly general essay questions may encourage students to "bluff" their way through without much study. Varying the types of questions on an exam takes into account the diverse learning styles of students, provides for opportunities to test different levels of understanding and helps prevent students from "divining" what to study based on your test type preference.

- Use student-made test items. If the best way to learn something is teach it, second best must be to create test items about it! Put students in mixed ability

thoughtful writing. Having to grade this type of question for an entire class is another matter! At the beginning of a unit, give students an extensive list of questions that cover the material from which you will randomly draw two for the upcoming classroom exam. To counteract the speed with which students share test information when you teach multiple sections, have a student draw questions out of a hat — adding to the drama and fun — at the beginning of each class. Students must prepare for all the questions but you have to grade only two.

- Ask for reflective responses. As extra credit on a test (or in the last minutes of class) ask students to jot down the most important, personally meaningful or most confusing concept in a unit. Their

answers provide constructive feedback on teaching and learning and serve as a vehicle for reteaching vague concepts.

- Put old tests on file for student use. One way to level the playing field and eliminate at least one form of cheating is to make old tests (questions only) readily available on a Web page, in the school library or in the classroom. Encourage students to review old tests, then modify and reuse old items on future tests as a way to reinforce using the tests as a study aid.

These are a few ideas about how teachers can tap into one of the greatest underutilized teaching and learning tools — the test. By mixing and modifying the schemes above, student learning will increase. Students

also will acquire habits and skills by which they can become more responsible for their own education.

If we teachers work at it, our classroom testing strategies can teach students that old tests and the material they cover are best not forgotten!

(Mark Wasicsko is the dean of the College of Education at Eastern Kentucky University. He has spent 25 years studying the dispositions of effective educators with particular emphasis on teacher selection and teacher preparation. Contact: mark.wasicsko@eku.edu, (859) 622-3515)



Photo by Rick McComb

T.C. Cherry Elementary student Alex Baughman concentrates as he completes a test in his primary class at the Bowling Green Independent school. A good classroom assessment should measure what students know and can do — not what they don't know and can't do, says Mark Wasicsko, dean of the College of Education at Eastern Kentucky University.

the next major exam or an assignment of their choice.

- Give the same test twice. Too many students have the attitude that "old tests are best forgotten." Once students hand in tests, they think they're "finished" with the material — learning what they missed isn't important. An unexpected readministration of the same test, allowing the students the higher (or average) of the two grades, can help students see value in researching answers they missed — thus increasing their learning. More difficult items from previous tests should make their way onto new tests to rein-

force random groups and have them construct test items. Encourage and provide opportunities for students to share their questions among groups. When students produce good test items, use them on the test. This is a "three-for:" students figure out what new information is most important, they gain a more thorough understanding of the concepts by constructing right and wrong answers, and they teach each other.

- Use more open-response questions. There is nothing better than a good exam question that asks students to demonstrate their understanding through

KILROY

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Students prepared for the dinner theater through different class activities. Those who wanted to be part of the dance team took jitterbug lessons from a professional dance instructor. Prospective cast members took voice lessons from the minister of music at a local church. These lessons, held before play practice at school, tied into our arts and humanities curriculum during the school day.

Students also researched costumes of World War II to lend authenticity to the play. Some of the cast got to wear original military uniforms loaned by friends and family members in the community.

Students in history classes participated in an online Veteran's History Project, which included interviewing local veterans and presenting their findings at the dinner theater and in class. (Details about the project can be found at the Library of Congress Web site at www.loc.gov/folklife/vets/getstarted.html.)

Many of the veterans attended the production as special guests. Students recognized these veterans, gave a brief biography of each and described their war experiences as part of the performance.

Local representatives and/or recruiters of the four branches of the military — Army, Navy, Air Force and Marines — were part of the grand finale of the production. They later visited the school to answer questions about the military as a career choice.

In November, we invited a local World War II veteran to speak to the student body as part of our Veteran's Day celebration. He also participated in the spring play.

English classes listened to recordings of famous speeches made during World War II. Students then wrote about and discussed the importance of these issues to their lives.

Mathematics teacher Wanda Sandling had her students use graphing calculators to demonstrate how the random selection process would determine which guests would receive a door prize at each performance. Sandling, Watson, the history teacher, and school secretary Janice Stephens are drama club sponsors and played major roles in the culminating activity for the World War II study.

Hands-on work

Students in the carpentry class designed and built the stage for the play while students in the computer graphics class designed the programs, advertising flyers and seating charts. Students in the computer applications class worked with other students enrolled in career and technical education to print the programs and design tickets for the event.

Consumer science students researched foods popular during the time period. They assisted with the catered meal and prepared the desserts as part of their classwork. They also decorated tables for the dinner performances using a World War II theme.

The Y-club, a school service club,



Photo by Rick McComb

Fulton High students gather on stage for a big production number during "Kilroy Was Here." Some 31 cast members performed songs and danced on a stage designed and built by students.

designed a bulletin board that listed former Fulton High students and local residents currently serving in Iraq. Guests and students could select a stamped card from the display to write notes to our hometown servicemen and women.

The journalism class produced flyers with information about the time period. Students who worked at the culminating event wore T-shirts designed and printed by the graphic arts and Student Technology Leadership Program (STLP) and Entrepreneurship classes.

Two years ago, we selected the Victorian Era to study as a schoolwide project. The school produced a musical of Charles Dickens' "A Christmas Carol" as its culminating event. The Victorian period of history was incorporated across the curriculum during the yearlong study.

As principal and an instructional partner in our schoolwide projects, I can attest that an integration project such as those we have used the past two years is an opportunity to involve all students.

The culminating project is open to any student who wants to participate — and the variety of jobs available offers something for everyone. Students could be part of the jitterbug dance team and the play cast. They could work in front of the lights or support the project behind the scenes.

The project keeps students working throughout the year. And, by having multiple performances, more students get a

chance to be a part of the performance.

The play also is a wonderful public relations tool. Parents and community members get to meet our students and see them in their best light.

I will admit it is a great deal of work, but it is well worth the effort as you see how creative teachers and students can be when they work together.

For more information, contact Dianne

Owen at dowen@fulton-ind.k12.ky.us; Wanda Sandling at sandlingw@fulton-ind.k12.ky.us; Janice Stephens at jstephens@fulton-ind.k12.ky.us; or Ann Watson at awatson@fulton-ind.k12.ky.us. Visit the school Web site at www.fulton-ind.k12.ky.us to view pictures of "Kilroy Was Here."

(Dianne Owen is principal of Fulton (Independent) High School.)



Talk to Us!

Kentucky Teacher wants to know what you think, what you need from the Department of Education, what you want to see in future issues.

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Photo by Terry Blake, RRS Design Group

Preparing a learning place

Students and staff from Hawesville Elementary and Lewisport Elementary schools walk toward the construction site of Hancock County Elementary School, which will replace their schools in August 2005. Students put on hard hats and used plastic shovels last spring to participate in groundbreaking ceremonies for the new P-5 school.

Student groups 'Unite to Read'

Unite to Read, a statewide project designed by members of Kentucky's Career and Technical Student Organizations (CTSO) to promote literacy and lifelong reading, is set to begin in elementary, middle and high schools across the state this school year.

Nearly 50,000 middle and high school CTSO members will lead the project in their respective schools. The project will dovetail with two national programs, the KET/PBS Ready to Learn Program and the Share a Story initiative.

Participating elementary schools will conduct a Share a Story night during the week of Oct. 18-22. A Unite to Read Certificate Program will encourage middle and high school students to increase the number of books they read during the school year.

Mary Alice Birdwhistell, president of the Kentucky Association of Family, Career and Community Leaders of America, said this project marks the first time that CTSOs, Future Educators of America and Kentucky's Student Technology Leadership Program (STLP) members have joined together in a statewide project.

STATE from Page 1

ing of the Kentucky Core Content Tests (KCCT). Having Kentucky teachers score the state assessments would provide immediate feedback to schools and allow the results to immediately impact instruction. It also would serve as an excellent professional development tool for educators. Additionally, it would keep the dollars spent for scoring the KCCT in Kentucky. The board learned that three options are possible:

- Having teachers score the KCCT using computers in their homes or at schools
- Having teachers score the KCCT at a number of sites in Kentucky

- Having teachers score the KCCT in their schools or districts

Each option has unique challenges as well as implementation issues and considerations, according to department staff. More discussion on this topic will occur in the coming months before the board makes a decision.

The board's Curriculum Committee discussed possible criteria for implementation of Kentucky's secondary GED program and examined criteria used by Jefferson County's pilot program and secondary GED programs in other states.

The secondary GED program

offers a "second chance" for a high school diploma to students who are at risk of dropping out. Students receive GED instruction at school using specific academic performance-based criteria that prepare them for the GED test.

In April, the board approved Kentucky's full implementation of the National Center for Education Statistics' (NCES) definition guidelines for dropouts and creation of a secondary GED program. These actions align the board's policies with the provisions of House Bill 178, recently passed by the General Assembly.

The board also approved proceeding with Kentucky's appli-

cation to the American Council on Education (ACE) to implement a secondary GED program. That application will clearly define how Kentucky will meet ACE's guidelines for the program. Department staff also will present a regulation for review on this matter at the board's August meeting.

The board approved and agreed to adopt Commissioner Gene Wilhoit's recommendation that an additional \$10 million in state funding recently allocated for education be earmarked for technology and preschool services. Districts also will have flexibility to use the money in

other areas, if needed. The recommendation was sent to Gov. Ernie Fletcher for inclusion in budget discussions for the 2004-2005 fiscal year.

The next meeting of the Kentucky Board of Education will be Aug. 11-12 in Frankfort. More information about the board is available at www.education.ky.gov. Enter "Kentucky Board of Education" in the keyword/search box and click.

(Information for this story was compiled by Lisa Gross, lgross@kde.state.ky.us, and Cathy Lindsey, clindsey@kde.state.ky.us.)

TEACHING from Page 1

Go to www.education.ky.gov and enter "#teaching tools" in the keyword/search box. The resources are available to teachers anytime, day or night.

"As a result of conversations I've had with teachers across the state, the department has created this online system that eventually will provide teachers with a wealth of resources to use in designing their classroom instruction," said Education Commissioner Gene Wilhoit. "As more and more teachers use and contribute to these resources, I believe this interactive work space will bring life to the key

components of instructional improvement that successful schools already are using."

Already posted on the Web site is a new Combined Curriculum Document that organizes the "Academic Expectations," "Program of Studies" and "Kentucky's Core Content for Assessment" in a single resource, sorted by content and grade level. This alignment of the three curriculum documents makes them more user friendly for educators, parents and students in understanding Kentucky's goals and standards for learning.

Another part of the Teaching

Tools is a link to sample curriculum maps developed by districts and schools across the state. Curriculum maps help educators organize instruction. They provide a sequence for delivering content and a clear scope of what must be taught to all students, based on Kentucky's curriculum documents.

Each curriculum map is accompanied by a description of how the district or school developed and implemented the map. The maps are formatted in a Microsoft Word document that can be downloaded and customized by other schools and districts.

Whenever possible, the maps include links to standards-based units of study.

Standards-based units of study provide comprehensive learning opportunities for students. They ensure that instruction is directed at Kentucky's standards. They also create an engaging learning experience for students and address ways to meet students' needs that are diversified, authentic and aligned with the standards.

The department's Web site also offers links to resources that will help schools and districts connect curriculum, instruction and

assessment. Among the resources are the critical attributes of a standards-based unit of study. The attributes can be used to assist in designing, reviewing and revising standards-based units of study. Go to www.education.ky.gov/JumpTo/?curriculumtools to access these resources.

Schools and districts that want to share their successful curriculum maps and units of study can submit the materials for consideration. For more information, contact Michael Miller, director of the Division of Curriculum Development, (502) 564-2106, mjmillier@kde.state.ky.us.

Leadership Letter

Compiled by Joy Barr
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State board presents inaugural Robinson Award

The Kentucky Board of Education presented the first Dr. Samuel Robinson Award to two recipients, Sen. Gerald A. Neal of Louisville and the One Community, One Voice Achievement and Closing the Gap Community Committee of Fayette County.

The state board established the award to honor retiring board member Samuel Robinson and to celebrate the 1954 Brown v. Board of Education decision. The annual award will be conferred on an individual or organization in Kentucky demonstrating outstanding commitment, service and leadership in promoting opportunities for all Kentucky students to learn at high levels.

Neal, a Louisville attorney, has been one of the state legislature's most tireless advocates for educational equality throughout the commonwealth, according to the award selection committee. He has been a legislator since 1989.

The One Community, One Voice Achievement and Closing the Gap Community Committee of Fayette County was established in 2002 by the Fayette County Board of Education to support and enhance efforts to close the achievement gap among all students. The organization brings together individuals, groups and organizations to help children learn literacy skills and be successful in school.

Studies completed on high school reform

"Crisis or Possibility? Conversations about the American High School" is a summary of discussions from several high school reform national conferences. The National Governors Association, the Council of Chief State School Officers, Jobs for the Future, and the federal offices of vocational and adult education sponsored the discussions.

Seven ideas for rethinking the U.S. high school emerged from the meetings:

- Connecting K-12 and post-secondary education to better prepare students for the world of work and higher education
- Making college preparation the "default" curriculum for all high school students
- Improving teacher preparation and professional development for high school teachers
- Ensuring that all students can read at or above grade level, including English-language learners
- Addressing the high dropout rate
- Fostering smaller, more personalized learning environments
- Revisiting state academic-content standards so that they are more flexible and give students a variety of options for meeting them

www.edweek.org/ew/ew_printstory.cfm?slug=37High%20School.h23



Photo by Rick McComb

Making a promise to education

David Rhodes, left, Bonnie Freeman, Janna Vice and David Webb are sworn into their new posts as members of the Kentucky Board of Education by Franklin Circuit Court Judge Reed Rhorer during a spring board planning meeting. Gov. Ernie Fletcher appointed the new members to four-year terms. They attended their first board meeting in June.

Primer helps evaluate education research

The Education Commission of the States and Mid-continent Research for Education and Learning have launched a new online tool to help policymakers and education leaders better understand and evaluate education research.

The interactive, online primer helps policymakers and other interested individuals answer three questions:

- What does the research say?
- Is the research trustworthy?
- How can the research be used to guide policy?

www.ecs.org/html/educationIssues/Research/primer/foreword.asp

'Postsecondary Education Update' is online

A new e-mail newsletter, "Postsecondary Education Update," is available online. Produced by the Kentucky Council on Postsecondary Education, the newsletter will provide relevant, timely and useful information on topics of interest to the Kentucky education community.

www.cpe.ky.gov/newsletter/

New book provides common sense approach to school reform

A new book, "Common Sense School Reform," addresses a variety of education reform issues facing the nation and local communities. The book, published by the American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research, presents a comprehensive approach to the challenge of improving schools. Author Frederick M. Hess, an education analyst, argues that five integrated principles are needed to improve schools:

- Increased accountability of students, teachers and administrators
- More choice and flexibility
- Greater openness in teacher recruitment
- Better training of administrators in management and leadership
- Enhanced use of technology to enable students, teachers and management

Hess applies lessons from successful organizations to the educational sector. Educators, he points out, are more effective when their performance is evaluated, success is rewarded and ineffective workers are sanctioned.

www.aei.org/publications/filter.,bookID.633/book_detail.asp

High-performance school buildings for all children

Like the people and programs within them, the quality of school buildings matters. The 21st Century School Fund and its partners have begun a campaign that calls on all community members to demand high-performance learning environments for every child.

www.21csf.org/csf-home/declaration/What_is_at_stake.asp

Online information, tips about education grants

Nonprofit organizations, especially those involved in education, can get easy, online access to the latest information about education grants and new funding opportunities for schools, districts, consortia and state education agencies. The Web site also provides links for teachers to classroom funding opportunities.

www.grantsalert.com

A second site, SchoolGrants, offers links to grant writing tips to help educators write successful grant proposals. www.schoolgrants.org/tips.htm

Western Elementary students revel in the arts

By Joy Barr

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"I never knew that music was considered an art," said Eddie Manning, an intermediate student at Western Elementary in Georgetown. That is just one of the many discoveries students made during the Scott County school's Arts and Humanities Day last spring.

During the annual Arts and Humanities Day, students spend the school day attending workshops in music, dance, theater and visual arts. Community volunteers share their expertise in the arts through sessions purposefully aligned to Kentucky's core content. Each session offers meaningful reinforcement of the district's curricular focus on the arts and humanities, said Erin Leland Adams, Western's music teacher and last year's event coordinator.

Western Elementary's teachers plan Arts and Humanities Day to complement and differentiate curriculum at the school. "Creating, performing and responding to dance, music, theater, the visual arts and literature introduces and improves instruction and student success," said Adams.

"We want to provide all students with an opportunity to appreciate Kentucky's culture and historical heritage," she added.

Billie Johnson, one of many volunteers at last year's event, plays bass in a bluegrass band. She shared some of her career experiences with students and introduced them to different bluegrass instruments, demonstrated her talent and let the students pluck the strings on her bass. She also emphasized the importance of developing an appreciation of Kentucky's culture.



High school pianist Daniel Ng demonstrates chords on a keyboard to Western Elementary students during the school's spring Arts and Humanities Day.

According to primary teacher Allyson Corman, the annual event is a good experience for both students and teachers. "It introduces students to new opportunities," said Corman.

"I learned that there are all types of art, not just painting and crafts, but drama, dancing and singing," said Kyle Starns, an intermediate student.

Principal Zan Rexroat supports the faculty's efforts to use these activities to raise school scores in the arts and humanities content area. "This day offers something unique for every child. It exposes them to different experiences. Everything is well planned, and the response from our community is great," said Rexroat.

One of the district's goals is to provide engaging and meaningful learning opportunities for all students. Devoting a day each year to arts and humanities activities keeps students interested, challenged and engaged in learning through creative and higher-order processes. Research shows that the study of the arts and humanities can improve mathematics and science skills, language and critical-thinking skills.

Volunteers at last year's event offered a wide variety of arts experiences and ranged in age from middle school students to adults. Georgetown Middle School's dance team performed. Members of the team encouraged the elementary students to participate in arts programs when they reach middle school.

Daniel Nj, a senior at Scott County High School, spoke with students after his piano performance. He emphasized how hard work and discipline are important skills for all areas of life.

"Practicing the piano every day helps me to focus and has improved my other studies as well," said Nj.

The Joy Dancers, an area church dance team, also stressed the importance of hard work and practice.

"This is a good opportunity for our students. Dance is movement and a creative release," said Teresa Sutherland, a 4th-grade teacher. "Participating in the sessions can help students see that the arts are an integral part of the curriculum."

For more information about Arts and Humanities Day at Western Elementary, contact Erin Leland Adams, (502) 863-1393, eadams@scott.k12.ky.us.



Photos by Rick McComb

Billie Johnson, upright bass player and vocalist with bluegrass band Billie Rene and Cumberland Gap, lets Western Elementary students test their pizzicato (plucking) skills on the stringed instrument.



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